

A PHILANTHROPIST???

VOTERS SHOULD KNOW ABOUT LAUREN MCLEAN'S PROFESSIONAL LIFE

I have voted for both Dave Bieter and Lauren McLean. I believe the two are quite similar when it comes to policy and their vision for the city and I share their views. That said, I believe the voters would be done a disservice if they didn't understand Ms. McLean's professional "career." The Idaho Statesman and the Idaho Press (I am sending this to both) have an obligation to look into this matter, as you will find that she is not a "philanthropist" or small business owner as has been reported but rather a political operative who runs a dark money organization designed to circumvent campaign finance sunshine laws.

I've learned through a number of sources that the operation she created is complex and designed to hide money and protect big out-of-state donors. It is my understanding that millions of dollars have been funneled through this dark money scheme over the last 10 years. This is not a crazy conspiracy theory but rather based on verifiable facts and documents readily obtained through the Secretary of State. What's not so readily obtained is the amount of money, the shadow network of funders, and how it is moved around. But there is little question that her professional work for the last 9 years is largely about violating the spirit of sunshine laws if not the campaign finance laws themselves.

I call your attention to this because Ms. McLean is running on a platform of greater openness and transparency. Yet, her professional life is anything but transparent.

I've attached a few publicly available documents here to get you started. And, I'm suggesting that as you pursue this story, you ask the following questions:

- 1) What is The Confluence Group (a business registered with the Secretary of State that she is President of) and what does it do? Who are its clients? Can we interview your clients? How many employees do you have?
- 2) What is the Idaho Progressive Investors Network (also registered with the Secretary of State and created at roughly the same time as The Confluence Group)? McLean is listed as a principal or organizer of this LLC and it's well documented that she runs this group. How much is McLean compensated?
- 3) What does the Idaho Investors Network do? How much money flows through it? How does it interface with The Confluence Group? What is the difference between the two?
- 4) Why doesn't she name the Idaho Investors Network as her place of employment?
- 5) Milt Gillespie, a Boise Planning and Zoning Commissioner, is listed as the registered agent for the Investors Network in recent filings with the Secretary of State. What role does he play? Does his relationship with McLean influence his P&Z votes, including a vote that was seemingly designed to embarrass Dave Bieter (see Idaho Statesman May 13 story, <https://www.idahostatesman.com/news/local/community/boise/article230367269.html>)
- 6) What is the Idaho "table" (a loose term that I gather refers to the various groups that are involved in the Network)? Who has a seat at the table and how much do they pay?

- 7) With all of her expertise regarding how to hide, redirect and obscure the sources of political money, how can we be assured that her campaign will be open and transparent? How many of the investors and groups that she's affiliated with are supporting her campaign and in what ways? Direct contributions? Independent expenditures?
- 8) Because this network conducts polling, funds campaigns, supports candidates through direct voter contact (canvassing), how much unreported benefit/campaign assistance has candidate McLean received from the network over the years, and most importantly this year as she's running for mayor? If she denies it, how can we be sure that she hasn't received significant material benefit as a candidate from the network she runs?

There are several people who have worked with McLean in the past (as employees of the Network? the table?) who no longer work for or with her. They might be good sources of information. This includes Shelley Landry, who now works in Washington, D.C. Admittedly, digging up evidence and a more complete picture of the whole scheme will take some work. But there should be plenty of people in this town who can start to shed light on this shadowy operation.

I'm also attaching a WikiLeaks email exchange between John Podesta and the Executive Director of the NEA, regarding the Idaho Investors Network. Similar to the Sun Valley meeting referenced in that email exchange, I've heard there's another such meeting in Sun Valley towards the end of this month, where donors and McLean will be present.